much of "the shop," as it is termed; and this again refers to his next remark; and to the remark of others, an objection, indeed, to making THE BUILDER a newspaper; we are no bigots to our opinion, and are content to be guided very much by the public in this respect, but we have many correspondents anxiously calling for it in the newspaper shape, and we have taxed our ingenuity to be prepared to meet both calls at a suitable period. We will give both, the newspaper and the magazine, let our circulation only attain the point to justify it.

"Vigil" is particularly thanked; his suggestions are truly valuable, and we hope to hear from him again; we claim for ourselves to be partially tolerant, and put in a similar claim to his toleration and that of our many esteemed friends who, like "Vigil," may differ from us occasionally in the selection of articles and our management of the paper; they will not be too critical or arbitrary, nor wish to have every thing to their own mind and in their own way. With regard to the strong objection that he appears to entertain to the constitution and proclamation of the "Free Masons of the Church," we have to observe that we welcome every labourer in the great cause of architectural resuscitation, and can readily pardon any little peculiarity in the manner of setting about it, even when we differ, about which we say nothing in this instance.

That which "Vigil" would have us make our paper, is what we have planned it to be for years, and with such good support as he tenders we shall be materially assisted. He is perfectly correct as to the value which this paper may and ought to be to the country builder; we believe it will be incalculable. It is from this spot, this mart as it were, of improvement and excellence in building art, that we propose to issue our bulletins of advance and progress, and we know well, from our whole experience, almost up to this date, what country building is—there is too much as he says, of the "rule-of-thumb" in it. Although "Vigil" objects to our publishing his letter, we are sure he will excuse us for making an extract when we find so much pertinent matter as is contained in the following:—

"Take an instance of the kind of ignorance I meet with. I propose blue cobble for a wall, in preference to an exceedingly porous sandstone. 'Oh, no,' says the builder, 'cobble *attracts* wet.' It was not a little difficult to shew him that the cobble was wet in damp weather because it *repelled* wet, while the sandstone seemed drier, solely because it imbibed it. He saw at last the difference was that of a Macintosh and cloth coat; but he had lived a long life in the error. Here, then, is one subject—the properties of stone, their different porosity, how to deal with porous stone, how to obviate its effects within, how to turn (if it be possible) the wet from penetrating from without, say by some cement, and if so, by what cement.

"But pray think of another body, to whom you may make your paper acceptable: I mean the public. I think you may do so, by copying the example of the *Gardeners' Chronicle*. Ten thousand things every one is interested in; though not actually building a house, a damp house may have to be made dry—a house, infirm in its wood-work, may have to be repaired—a house may have to be warmed—outhouses may have to be added—a byre, a piggery, a manure-tank—a house may have to be furnished. Admit questions, and take care to give full and accurate answers,—or take subjects into your own hands which are interesting to all readers. Thus: promise a paper on the different sorts of ventilation which are advertised—ditto as to stoves—ditto as to stucco paints—ditto as to the various cements, Hall's, Keene's, Martin's, Musgrave's, and how they are made—ditto as to carpets, woollen, *cotton*, and *hemp*, in all their varieties."

When we say, for the benefit of our readers, that "Vigil" is not a professional gentleman, but one who gives considerable employment to builders, we shall have secured for him a grateful estimation of the favour he bestows upon us by his communication.

OUR SERMON.—No. II.

TO APPRENTICES.

WOULD that it were in our power to command the words that would give expression to our anxiety and solicitude in behalf of that rank of the building fraternity which we are now about to address—would that we could marshal together to hear us all that class of the hope of the building art, who range from the age of fourteen to eighteen years; we mean the junior apprentices (those above that age we class with the men); these youths, probably fifty thousand in number, have a most important duty to discharge, and perhaps, more than any other fifty thousand living beings, have devolving upon them the weight of directing that great change—nay, we may call it that revolution—in building art, which these times are evidently designed to bring about.

Could they be made to feel and understand the importance of the part they have to perform in the great workings of the next half-century—in bringing back the handicraft skill and the love of art, the devotedness which characterized the workmen of the middle ages; could they imagine—which is much like the fact—could they imagine themselves handed together, as it were, fifty thousand strong, setting out on the mission for the recovery of long-lost excellence and the discovery of farther good, led on by one who humbly seeks to direct them in the path of honest fame—could they see and feel all this, our work would be half done, and the tide of fortune, in this affair of a nation's retrieval, would have reached its flood.

It is sufficient, however, for us to work on in the well-grounded hope that our motives entitle us to success—so far, at least, as human motives are an ingredient or an agent in such matters. If our words fall upon the ear of the docile,—of but one in that fifty thousand,—and should happily influence that one only, to think and act for the future in something of the spirit in which our remarks are couched, we shall have effected a good, the ultimate ends, and benefit of which it were impossible to estimate; but if such should be the case with more than one, with some hundreds, or with thousands, how much more rapid, how much more signal will be the return to right principles of thought and action.

Let us hope that the reluctance which many feel to reading sermons may not deter them from conning over this of ours; we promise them, none will repent of the time necessary, or regret to have had his attention thus engaged.

What is it we would preach to them about; what wisdom, what morality inculcate? The wisdom we would teach would be to secure content, to make the time of their apprenticeship pass on, not heavily or painfully, but cheerfully; the morality would be that of a principle which, like the governor of a steam-engine, would regulate their every purpose, and cause an end of unqualified satisfaction.

Let us beg of these young men, first of all, that they give us their attention, and that they will consider it a matter of duty to do so. We are going to plead their cause with their masters and superiors; but we shall also plead it with themselves. We shall plead that those above regard them with affection, and that they regard themselves with respect. These are something like new pleadings and novel language, but they include the secret of that success which we are in pursuit of. Remember that you are fifty thousand! Remember that you have your whole career of business life before you; that your business is in the exercise of a calling, which however low it may have yet appeared to you, is in truth one of the highest and noblest, and has engaged in all time past the master-minds of their periods, and contributed more, as it still remains to contribute more, to the earthly comfort, happiness, and delight of your species, than perhaps any other art that man may or can exercise. Read over the pages of this work in its series, and collect from them how great is your vocation, and for what high purposes you are destined; raise your minds to the consideration of this inspiriting truth—let each one of the fifty thousand say, who knows but that I may have the honour and the pride to have my name associated with some master-piece of the Carpenters', Masons', Bricklayers', Plasterers', Painters', Glaziers', Cabinet-makers', Sculptors', Carvers', Mechanics', or Designers' art, with something that posterity may look on with as much of admiration and delight, as we now look on those glorious examples of works of similar arts in days gone by! Remember that every one of those innumerable fine specimens were the production of men who once, like yourselves, were apprentices, and who arrived at the excellence that distinguished them, by some secret of inward working to correspond with the greatness that was without—they had a principle to guide them, which, if you also follow, will infallibly lead to the same results.

You are fifty thousand!—you are in that period of the age of human beings which has most promise: from 14 to 18 is an age that seems intended by your Maker for permanent designs to be founded in—he has so ordered it that death shall least disturb, or very nearly so, the human pursuits of that period—that is, the number of deaths at your age is less than in any other four years of the period of human existence, with a very trivial exception; this then is the period of bright hopes and the determining of destinies. Parents and friends looking on, anxious to note the promise and turn of your ability; masters intent on giving that drift to your talent which they have engaged for and are interested in—the genius of your respective arts presiding over this entrance-fold of the boundless territory of fame,—the genius of your country invoking you to gather for it laurels and chaplets of evergreen to weave with the garlands that have been preserved to her—the master-spirits of the past, calling upon you, through their works, to emulate them—to wipe away the reproach that has been thrown upon the period of their devoted and generous labours—to rescue the germs of their workings from the attempted oblivion of barbarism, to collect and enshrine them in suitable niches of your own, to set them off in the precious mountings of more than silver or gold—the sterling, the chaste, the invaluable gatherings from the mine of mind and honourable purpose which you are now commencing to explore.

For these ends, then, it is, that we come amongst you, to give you the first anxious outpourings of honest and affectionate advice. Listen to us, and accompany us in that spirit, which your hearts, in all their simplicity, truthfulness, and energy, can give of a giant and irresistible force for all the ends of good. Do this, and we will promise you again, rewards, solid, and satisfactory, and bright, such as have not been exceeded by any of the gifts to men. Young men of hope and promise—you of the corps of fifty thousand! you of the arts most distinguished—make up your minds, we entreat you, and give us your hearts and hands pledged to the glorious exhibit. Soon you will hear from us again.

ANCIENT SEAL.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BUILDER.

SIR,—The annexed is a representation of a seal lately found in the ruins of Reading Abbey; it is not of any importance, but is supposed to have been the private seal of a monk, that kind of seal having been frequently used by them; it is therefore interesting only as a specimen of ancient art, the execution being very rude. The legend is, "Ave Maria gracia plena,"—"Hail Mary, full of grace;" the seal is about an inch and a half in a length.

Reading Abbey was founded by Henry I., in the year 1121, for 200 benedictine monks: its income, at the dissolution, amounted to 2,116*l.* 3*s.* 9½*d.*, now worth 42,325*l.* 14*s.* 10*d.*; and was granted in the fourth year of Edward VI. to Edward, Duke of Somerset. It was discovered whilst blowing up part of the ruins, in order to form the foundations of a house for the governor of the prison, by Mr. White, the clerk of the works, and is now in possession of the authorities of Reading.

ALPHA.

We regret that the draughtsman in copying on the wood merely transcribed the seal impression, so that the reverse is here given of what we intended.

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